

Revolution in Judaea



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This book should be read by every Christian who seriously claims to study the Bible. As an example of some of the insights that I found, Maccoby suggests that while Jesus might have been crucified at the time of the Passover, it is more likely that he entered Jerusalem and held his Last Supper at the time of the feast of Tabernacles. The Passover is in Spring and the feast of Tabernacles is in the Fall. This suggestion suddenly makes all kinds of sense out of what are maybe trivial but puzzling events in the Bible narrative. Why would any rational person curse a fig tree for not having figs in the spring. An "upper" room was common for the feast of Tabernacles. How about the simple statement of Jesus dipping the sop into the wine? Have you ever tried to sop wine with unleavened bread? Since the Christian faith preaches that Jesus was the lamb of God, then why isn't there any reference to the lamb as part of the meal? Where did the crowds get their leafy branches to strew in his path so early in the Spring? All these anomalies are answered with a simple shift of venue. Maccoby presents a compelling case that Jesus was a 'passive' revolutionary. That is, he did not preach violent overthrow of the Romans by his followers. However he saw in the prophecies of Zechariah that God would send armies of angels to accomplish the task if there was sufficient righteousness. Zechariah writes "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations...and his feet shall stand on the mount of Olives...and the mount

shall cleave in the midst thereofand ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains..." One wonders if this was why Jesus was praying so fervently on the mount of Olives the night of his arrest, and why when the prophecy was not fulfilled he called from the cross 'My God why hast thou forsaken me". Jesus preach the literal coming of the kingdom of God to replace the rule of the Romans and their quisling Jewish leaders and he was crucified as a revolutionary not for blasphemy. This is an uncomfortable book for many since it does not exactly fit orthodox Christian theology. Like the previous reviewer I would like to see this book reprinted and once more on bookstore shelves.

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